

Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forests Rights) Bill, 2005

*159. DR.E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any conflict between his Ministry and the Ministry of Tribal Affairs in bringing the Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forests Rights) Bill, 2005 in the Parliament; and

(b) if not, whether consensus has been reached in this respect and if so, the status of the Bill?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI A. RAJA):

(a) The Ministry of Environment & Forests had communicated its comments on the draft Scheduled Tribes (Recognition of Forests Rights) Bill, 2005 to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs.

(b) The Bill has been introduced in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2005 by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs and has been referred to a Joint Committee of Parliament. The Joint Committee has suggested several major amendments to the Bill introduced in the Lok Sabha on 13.12.2005 and reported a revised Bill titled 'The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forests Rights) Bill, 2006'. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs has examined the changes made by the Joint Committee and placed it before the Group of Ministers. The Group of Ministers (GoM) has met twice on 20.7.2006 and 13.11.2006 and has given its recommendations. The Ministry of Tribal Affairs is now taking further action as per the recommendations of the GoM to finalise the Bill as per the established procedure.

Rail Ratna

*160. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have decided to enter in the hospitality sector in a big way by setting up a chain of one hundred hotels known as "Rail Ratna" at railway stations across the country by entering into a partnership with a private group of hotels who will build and run the three star hotels; and

(b) if so, how many cities/railway stations have, so far, been identified,